

32

INSTALLATION ADDRESS

R. E. SIR CHARLES M. STOCK
GRAND COMMANDER

ACADEMY OF MUSIC
PHILADELPHIA, MAY TWENTY-SEVENTH
1903

GRAND COMMANDERY
KNIGHTS TEMPLAR
OF PENNSYLVANIA



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SIR KNIGHTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

This magnificent presence, and the unique exercises in which we are engaged, demand a rational explanation.

Whence this unwonted military dress, adorned with belt and baldric, badge and shoulder-strap, chapeau and waving plume ?

Whence these unusual titles which here salute the ear,—Herald and Marshal, Warder and Warden, Commander and Grand Commander ?

Whence these solemn, stately ceremonies, conducted with military precision and circumstance, consisting of invocation, charge and vow, punctuated with triumphal sacred song, and with the fitting finale, yet to come, of proclamation and thrice-repeated trumpet-blast ?

Why, in time of peace, this display of war-like accoutrements, and martial banners bearing strange words and pictorial legends ?

What signified that long line of yesterday, and specially that beautiful closing panorama, when all the bands of music consolidated as one, moved up the fairest street of this the first representative city of our western world to the cadence of that

most admirable processional known to this generation ; and as if in closest sympathy with the sentiments expressed by that melody, all the banners drew near, the one to the other, presenting to the eye of the beholder a united oriflame of splendor, while directly behind, in close order, in ranks reaching from curb to curb, marched thousands of men who in standing and worth are the aristocracy of Freemasonry, the harmony which filled their ears thus articulate to their hearts :

“ We are not divided,
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity.”

The questions, “Whence all of these things, What mean ye by them, Whither do they tend ?” are proper ones, and deserve a respectful and truthful answer.

Had all the banners of the Subordinate Commanderies of this Templar Jurisdiction been arranged in historic sequence, from them alone as they passed our story could have been readily learned.

A banner is meant to be a sign, the declaration of a cause or principle ; and if this principle happens to appeal to the deeper emotions of human nature, as the religious or patriotic, men will willingly sacrifice their lives for the defence and honor of the banner. Those which are displayed by Knights Templar are, in their words and devices, most expressive and eloquent ; they declare our faith and principles ; they appeal to our religion and patriotism ; and up to them we are taught to look with devotion and love, with joyous confidence and holy hope. Each separate banner publishes some important part, and when we have viewed the whole in proper connection and order, Knight Templary becomes an open book which may be known and read of all men.

The Cross, everywhere in evidence,—upon banner and dress and sword-hilt,—means that this Order is founded upon the Christian religion.

The heart of the Christian religion is Jesus, the Christ—Son of God and Son of Man—the world's Savior. He was inducted into His public ministry by the mysterious rite of baptism, administered at the river Jordan.

As the preface to our story, I call up the banner of either of the century-old Commanderies, *St. John's* of Philadelphia or *St. John's* of Carlisle. The pictorial representation we see beneath the word *St. John's* portrays Immanuel receiving the initiatory sacrament at the hands of His forerunner—John the Baptist. “Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”

Man's salvation is wrought out by the closing acts of Christ's ministry; accordingly, a cluster of our banners commemorate these: *Kedron* of Greensburg—the sweet-gliding brook which separated between the Holy City and the scene of His passion; *Gethsemane* of York—the garden of His soul-agony, where “His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground”; *Prince of Peace* of Ashland—the name given Him by the prophet Isaiah, and verified in the hour of betrayal; peace and forgiveness staying the hand of a hasty disciple as He said, “Suffer ye thus far”; “And he touched his ear, and healed him”; *Cyrene* of Columbia—in memory of Simon of Cyrene, the stalwart man from north Africa who was compelled to bear our Savior's cross; *Calvary* of Danville, and *Mt. Calvary* of Greenville—the place outside of the city walls where the awful tragedy was consummated; “And he bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.” Amid the wonders of a quaking earth, rending rocks, and opening graves, the Roman Captain of the Guard was impelled to witness: “Truly this was the Son of God!”

All hail the thrice-blessed banner of *Mary* of Philadelphia—our declaration of the glorious fact of the Resurrection! She who was last at His cross, and earliest at His grave, finds the tomb empty, and as she weeps in ignorance of its meaning, the Master Himself appears; “And Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni.”

Hail *Mt. Olivet* of Erie—the hill of the Ascension! “He was parted from them and carried up into heaven,” and is seated at the right hand of the Father, a Mediator and Intercessor for all those who have faith in Him.

These are the most sacred things of which men have knowledge—the crown-jewels of the Christian’s faith—and these are the primary truths confessed and glorified in by Knights Templar.

Our attention is next invited to a trio of banners of later and different historical significance: *Constantine* of Pottsville, *Nativity* of Pottstown, *Constans* of Bellefonte. Constantine, in honour of the first Christian emperor of Rome; he who was granted the wonderful vision of the blazing cross in the heavens, with the audible divine Command, “In hoc signo vinces,” and who, thereupon, exchanged the eagle of the imperial standard for the crown, inscribed with the mysterious Labarum; who, also, in conjunction with his mother, Helena, early in the fourth century, erected splendid Christian churches over the sites, respectively, of the stable, the place of the Nativity, at Bethlehem, and the Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Constans, the third of the five sons of Constantine, and to whom was assigned the government of the western provinces of the vast Roman Empire.

Thus, with the Holy Land under secure protection in the persons of Christian princes, and the tendency strong in human nature to localize incidents in the religion professed, the desire became irrepressible throughout all Christendom to

personally visit the places hallowed by the presence and work of Christ. The pious pilgrim could trace the steps of the Redeemer from the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, which marked the spot of the manger, and where the Wise Men from the East offered Him gold and frankincense and myrrh, to the region of Bethabara where He was baptised of John; thence, up to the Holy City, across the Kedron to Gethsemane, along the Via Dolorosa trod by Him and His cross-bearer, Simon of Cyrene, to Mt. Calvary, where He wrought out the atonement for the sins of the world; he could offer up his devotions at the Holy Shrine which marked the Sepulchre and the Resurrection—the very spot where Mary worshipped her risen Lord; he could “look steadfastly toward heaven” from the brow of Olivet as he meditated upon the Ascension.

During seven hundred years, interrupted occasionally with the ebbs and flows which marked the struggle between the powers of Mohammedan Persia and Christian Rome, did these pilgrimages continue.

In 1092 the Seljukian Turks from the deserts of central Asia invaded and conquered the kingdoms of the Persian Empire, subjugated Asia Minor, and became masters of Syria. Jerusalem fell into their hands, and the time of the most fearful persecution of the Christians had come. Their holy places were profaned and destroyed, the few survivors of large bands of pilgrims came back to Europe, year after year, not as formerly, with hearts rejoicing in the accomplishment of their pious purposes, but they returned home famished, mutilated, wounded nigh unto death, and with awful tales of their own sufferings and of the cruel deaths of those who had succumbed beneath the persecutions of the barbarous unbeliever.

With this preliminary statement, our banners will again resume the tale:

Hermit of Lebanon—in honor of the monk, Peter the Hermit, who travelled the whole length of Italy, crossed the Alps into France, and with cross held aloft fired the hearts of the people, as with rugged eloquence he related the story of the sufferings of the Christians who visited the Holy Land.

Dieu le Veut of Wilkes-Barre and *Crusade* of Bloomsburg—in commemoration of the spectacle witnessed, the words uttered, and the movement inaugurated at the Council of Clermont, when Pope Urban II pronounced his memorable oration, the most wonderful in its results of any single speech ever spoken by man, at the conclusion of which the immense multitude of laity and clergy present, with united voice, responded to his call for a Crusade—"Dieu le Veut! Dieu le Veut!" "It is the will of God! It is the will of God!" and within a few months armies composed of hundreds of thousands of crusaders were on the march.

Oriental of Johnstown, *Palestine* of Carbondale, *Jerusalem* of Phoenixville—indicating the objective points of this well-nigh universal European movement—To the Orient,

"That land where the cypress and myrtle,
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime;
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime;"

To Palestine, that part of the Orient of most sacred memories:
sanctified by the foot-steps of the Son of God—

"Happy once in Heaven's peculiar love,
Delight of men below, and saints above;"

To Jerusalem—

"Where thou, O Christ, with anguish spent,
Forgave Thy foes and died,
Thy garments now are daily rent,
Thy soul is crucified."

On the fifteenth of July, 1099, after an assault of such fury and reckless bravery and a defence of such stubborn courage, as have rarely, if ever, been equalled in the bloody annals of war, Jerusalem was captured; the cross was raised in place of the crescent upon the Hill of Zion. By unanimous consent, Godfrey of Boulogne, the military head of the Crusade, was chosen king, but he refused the title, consenting to serve only as administrator.

While the Holy City was now, and remained for nearly one hundred years, in the hands of the Christians, the roads leading thither were infested by the cruel Mohammedan enemy, and the outrages upon travellers became, if possible, more heart-rending than ever. From this circumstance, the Valiant and Magnanimous Order of Knights Templar had its origin.

Hugh de Payens of Easton, *St. Omer* of Brownsville, *Pilgrim* of Harrisburg, *Kadosh* of Philadelphia—The first two in honored remembrance of the most prominent, who, with seven other knights of gentle blood, associated themselves for the protection of the Pilgrim on the way to offer up his devotions at the Holy Shrine. These nine first assumed a humble name “Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Jesus Christ,” and elected Hugh de Payens their commander; the warrior-bishop, St. Adhemar, abbreviated St. Omer, the first of the clergy to assume the Red Cross at the Council of Clermont, being second in command. *Kadosh* is a Hebrew word which signifies devoted, consecrated; by a solemn vow these men dedicated their lives and fortunes and sacred honor to the defence of the Sepulchre, and the protection of those who with pious purpose sought the Holy Places.

Baldwin II. of Williamsport, *Temple* of Tunkhannock, *Chasseur* of Philadelphia, *Hospitaller* of Lock Haven. While this Baldwin sat upon the throne, the second Christian King

of Jerusalem, he assigned the new Order quarters to the end of his palace which faced the former site of Solomon's Temple, hence the change in name, Knights of the Temple, or Knights Templar. Chasseur—the nature of their duties required their being mounted, and for this reason the old seal of the Order represents two knights upon one horse, indicative of its early poverty. Hospitaller, or Knights of St. John—in honor of an associated Order which was specially devoted (at the time of its constitution) to the caring for the sick and wounded in a hospital founded and maintained by it in the city of Jerusalem.

Tancred of Pittsburg—the bravest of all the Templars, and who in his qualities of mind and heart approximated closely the “very gentle perfect knight” of Chaucer. Tasso's great Italian Epic “Jerusalem Delivered” has immortalized the knightly deeds of Sir Tancred.

Ascalon of Pittsburg—in memory of one of the most bloody of all battles of this two hundred years' war, in which the Templars turned the tide in favor of the Christians by their prodigies of valor.

Coeur de Lion of Scranton—the English Richard; he of the Lion's Heart; the hero of third Crusade; “whose tremendous name,” says Gibbon, “was employed by the Syrian mothers to silence their infants.”

Ivanhoe of Mahanoy City and *Rebecca* of Sharon—in courteous recognition of the genius of Walter Scott, two of whose most delightful characters are thus honored.

Jacques de Molay of Washington and *De Molay* of Reading—in loving remembrance of the martyred Grand Master of the Templars, who fell a victim to the cupidity and hatred of Pope Clement V., and King Philip IV., of France. The burning at the stake of this white haired old warrior is one of the saddest stories of the world's history.

Two of our banners commemorate earlier Christian heroes: *St. Alban* of Philadelphia—the first Christian martyr of England. *St. Andrews* of Susquehanna—the patron saint of Scotland.

Trinity of Bradford rounds out the declaration of our faith—we believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

Thus under the guidance of the words blazoned upon one-half of our seventy-seven banners, I have sought to set forth in the most condensed way possible the primal tenets of Knight Templary, and the facts relating to our origin and earlier history. It has doubtless been observed how the realm of myth and tradition has been carefully avoided; only matters of unquestioned historical accuracy have been adverted to. It was with great diffidence that the vision of Constantine the Great was introduced, since it certainly savors of the supernatural, and for this reason has been savagely scouted by the historian Gibbon. Eusebius, the Father of Church History, first gave publicity to this wonderful story, stating that Constantine himself related the details of the vision to him shortly prior to his death, and appreciating the remarkable nature of the narrative, the warrior emperor confirmed his own belief in its truthfulness with a sacred oath.

Certain question relating to the ancient Templars have been much discussed, and so wide has been the divergence in opinion among writers, that modern members of the Order, who have an honest desire for the truth, are at times at a loss to know what they shall believe. To us of this age it is altogether immaterial as affecting our devotion to the present principles of Templary, whether or not there is an uninterrupted historical connection between the twelfth century and the twentieth. Let us, however, for a moment glance at a few facts, and where authentic history is silent, weigh the probabilities.

A mooted question is : Did the old Order degenerate, and become corrupt and utterly depraved, and actually cease to exist?

A number of undeniable truths would seem to return a very positive negative to the several parts of this question.

When James De Molay, the twenty-second Grand Master of the old Order, was inveigled to France from the Island of Cyprus, in 1306, for a pretended conference upon the advisability of another Crusade and incidentally, to stand as godfather at the baptism of one of the children of Philip IV, he took with him but sixty Knights, left the Marshal of the Order as Regent in the Island, and to safeguard the Order in the event of his not being spared to return, the aged Grand Master designated who, in his opinion, should succeed him in his high office. The Knights of St. John Hospitaller were also invited to this conference in Paris, but suspecting a plot, they declined going, and did not leave their stronghold upon the Island of Rhodes.

When De Molay with his sixty, and such other Templars as were in Paris, were arrested by order of the King, the charges preferred against them were infidelity to the Christian tenets and treason towards the Christian Powers. This noble, proud, and austere Order, which was sworn to the faith of Christ and the practice of the Christian virtues, which had waged furious and relentless war with the Saracens, poured its best blood like water for two hundred years upon the soil of Palestine, was actually, in the persons of these representatives, arraigned and tried. The original testimony submitted against it is in existence, and may be examined to-day. This evidence in detail is ludicrous and ridiculous in the extreme, and for this reason dignified historians have been baffled by it, and have confessed inability to understand or explain it.

It seems to me that one reflection makes it all plain, viz: The element of humor in human nature. Six hundred years ago, as now, men were given to fun and frolic, and not always careful as to the connection in which their playful proclivities were indulged. I am convinced, after reading many pages of specifications in support of charges of wrong-doing alleged against the olden Templars, that the love of burlesque and the rough sport practiced by our ancient Fraters at mock initiations of those in character and intellect unfitted for knighthood, and probably the conferring of what we would call "side degrees" upon the youthful and inexperienced, are responsible for the only shadow of truth to support the charge that the Order had become corrupt or depraved.

On May 12th, 1310, fifty-four stakes, encircled with dry wood, were erected by one of the gates of Paris. Fifty-four Templars were led out—men of noble birth, and in the full health and strength of manhood. The royal herald proclaimed that those who should confess would at once be set at liberty. Not one man showed the least sign of weakness; they resolutely asserted the innocence of their Order, and their own faith as Christians, and sealed this testimony with their lives. During this season of persecution one hundred and thirteen were burned in Paris, and not one apostate. Such men may play undignified pranks, but who would question the integrity of their manhood, or their sincerity as Christians?

In Spain and Portugal the Templars were tried upon the same charges, and their acquittal was solemn, general, and complete. In Germany, the Council at Mentz, after examining thirty-eight witnesses, declared the Order guiltless; their enemies being their judges, their characteristic crime, if crime it was, was great pride in and attachment to their Order.

Why then, the condemnation in France? This question invites an interesting narrative. Templar tradition has it that the King, Philip the Fair, by reason of his notoriously

bad character, was denied admission into the Order and was after revenge. Be this as it may, it is evident that for some reason, he was filled with bitter hatred toward it, and long plotted a blow which he intended to be deadly.

Upon the testimony of Romanist writers, this period marked the Babylonish captivity of the Church, and it lasted more than seventy years. The Pope, Clement V., and his administration figure prominently in the scandals of the Dark Ages. It is an admitted fact that he secured his elevation to the pontifical chair through a corrupt bargain made with Philip of France. Said the wily Philip to the Bishop of Bordeaux, at a private conference held in a forest: "One word from me, and you are Pope." That word was spoken upon the compliance of the Bishop to six conditions. Five of these were particularly enumerated, the sixth was to be kept secret until such time as the King elected to claim its fulfilment. The future Pope readily promised all, and the day soon came when he was horrified to learn that the sixth condition called for the confiscation of the wealth and the shedding of the blood of the Knights Templar. What jurist would not brand a trial conducted under such conditions and with such motives, as persecution, and on its face, its finding of guilt, unjust and untrue.

The last part of the query yet demands notice. Did the old Order cease to exist as the result of this opposition waged against it? On general principles this question might be answered by asking another. In all the history of the world, has ever a movement been effectually suppressed by persecution? It has passed into a proverb that the blood of the martyrs has been the prolific seed of the Christian church. If a comparison be instituted between the Order of the Temple under James de Molay and the Roman hierarchy under Pope Clement V., on which side is to be found the greater likeness to the Church of Christ and his Apostles?

Further, the Order of the Temple had been in existence for nearly two hundred years. The nine original Knights were now "fifteen thousand of the bravest, best trained, most experienced soldiers of the world." The three vows—celibacy, obedience, and poverty—were binding as ever, but the third vow was intended as operative in the individual Knight only. While he surrendered all his wealth, it was to the Order as his legatee; so the Order became immensely wealthy. It had manors, preceptories, priories, farms, mines, hamlets, villages, and in every city of consequence, in England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal; it had magnificent palaces as headquarters, and islands of the Mediterranean were fortified strongholds in its possession. Is it reasonable to suppose that an Order so thoroughly organized, of such vast resources and wealth, and composed of men of such training and character, would cease to be, because a corrupt Church in conjunction with a few princelings, condemned some of its members to the stake and declared some of its possessions escheat to the crown?

History furnishes at least one instance of analogy by which the probabilities of this case may be weighed. The Order of Teutonic Knights was instituted in Palestine during the Crusades, and at about the same time as the Order of the Temple, and for a somewhat similar purpose. This Order has a clearly defined history down to this present. Notwithstanding that Napoleon I. issued an imperial edict in 1809 abolishing it, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights to-day is Archduke Eugene of Austria, with headquarters in the city of Vienna; and the original vow of celibacy is still preserved.

That the Order of the Temple does not figure in history after the beginning of the fourteenth century is only what, under the circumstances, could be expected. When bitter persecution began, and the Crusades were at an end, the persecuted would have no occasion to obtrude themselves upon public notice, but rather the reverse.

A student of history of six hundred years hence would greatly err did he conclude that because of the anti-Masonic movement in Pennsylvania and New York at about the middle of the nineteenth century, Freemasonry ceased to exist as the result of that opposition. We know that the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity has had a continuous life and being in this State from the earliest times until now, but only when traduced and maligned does Freemasonry figure upon the pages of the history of our Commonwealth.

There is one other question which has greatly perplexed modern Knights Templar, and to such a degree that they have hesitated in even a qualified affirmative reply, through fear that such might be construed as a reflection upon their intelligence or veracity, or both: Is there any historical connection between this Order here present to-night, which is allied with the Masonic Fraternity, and the Order of the same name of the time of the Crusades? We briefly note a few facts, and each may draw his own conclusion.

The Knights Hospitaller of St. John, as has already been noted, kept out of the way of persecution as much as possible. At some time this Order and that of the Temple became one, for they are one to-day. When to all probability would such a union be effected, remembering that while these religious-military Orders had at times their petty differences, when the issue was joined for the truth, for two hundred years they fought side by side, their blood mingling as it flowed, and in battle their only emulation was to surpass one another in deeds of valor?

Further, the ancient Knights Templar were great builders, as were also the Hospitallers. Dwellings, palaces, churches, fortifications, were erected with their wealth. But they themselves were neither architects nor operative masons; they were warriors. Therefore, they must have employed large numbers

from the medieval masonic guilds. Now, seeing that Templary to-day is most closely associated with speculative Masonry, there must have been a time when this amalgamation took place. What are the probabilities, considering that the persecuted Templars and the members of the Masonic guilds long prior to the fourteenth century had much in common?

Again, the Masonic Constitutions, or the "old charges," some dozens of which are in existence, running back through four hundred years prior to the English "revival" of 1717, are all distinctively Christian; recognizing not only God, but Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the Christian Church. The claim advanced by one of Pennsylvania's most scholarly Past Grand Commanders within the present year is undoubtedly well-founded and true, viz: That the entirety of ancient Masonry is to-day found only in the Order of the Temple. These are facts.

And yet, notwithstanding these surface truths, the wise-aces who deny that George Washington was a Free Mason will never lack company in other realms of doubt and denial, and until the end of time to demur will be considered a mark of erudition. We can confidently predict that in a century or two there will be a class who will hold that Stephen Girard and Thomas R. Patton and William L. Elkins never wore the lambskin apron.

Knights Templary has doubtless been reorganized, even radically, as Freemasonry has been. Conditions have changed. No wars need be waged for Holy Places; all shrines are accessible. Not alone in Joseph's garden, nor yet alone at Jerusalem, but to the ends of the earth, worship is free. It is the essence of knighthood to battle for ideals, but under increased enlightenment by and through the Christ Spirit, ideals are refined and elevated. Not the physically strong man, as at the time of the Crusades, but the morally and spiritually strong, is the great man to-day. Six hundred years have taught

the Templar, and every Christian, that the highest virtue is not found in celibacy; the lowliest poverty is not of the purse, but of the heart; the best obedience is that to the heaven-instructed conscience.

Relatively the same class of men are Knights Templar now as were of the Order in the olden time; but the world has progressed far towards the ideal of the Man of Nazareth; consequently the race stands upon a higher plane; and in the further elevation of the years to come, this Order composed of Christians of every name, united in Christ, confessing the old ecumenical Creed of the Apostles, and holding that the practice of the Christian virtues is the true hall-mark of the child of God, must be an important factor.

Members of the Grand Commandery of Pennsylvania: Words are poor to express my appreciation of the honor you have conferred upon me in elevating me to this most exalted station,—Grand Commander of the largest Grand Commandery of Knights Templar in the world. I appreciate, too, the immense responsibility which attaches to this office. My one and only ambition shall be to maintain the high standard set by my distinguished predecessors.

In the stately old court church at Innsbrück, that beautiful city so charmingly situated in the Austrian Tyrol, there stands among the great circles of bronze statues one of Godfrey of Boulogne, the grand old crusader, and it is distinct from all the others in that on the helmet rests a crown of thorns. It is intended to commemorate the action of Godfrey, who after his capture of Jerusalem on that July day so long ago, when his enthusiastic soldiers wished to crown him as king, made answer, "I will not wear a crown of gold where my Master wore a crown of thorns."

My brethren, from this night unto one year hence, your Grand Commander is one that serveth.

